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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

NFAC #4389-80
19 June 1980MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central IntelligenceVIA : Bruce C. Clarke, Jr.
Deputy Director, National Foreign AssessmentRichard Lehman
National Intelligence Officer for WarningFROM : Arnold L. Horelick
National Intelligence Officer for USSR-EESUBJECT : Monthly Warning Assessment: USSR-EE
(Meeting held on 17 June 1980) (S)

What does this NIO think?

1. Latin America. There was general agreement that the expansion of Soviet activities in Latin America has reached a point that justifies a review of our collection capabilities and priorities and steps toward the preparation of a community assessment. Some analysts expressed the view that the sharp deterioration in US-Soviet relations had increased Moscow's propensities to challenge major U.S. interests in the area, while other analysts held that Moscow would be particularly eager to avoid challenges that it believed could lead an already vigilant and combative Washington to "overreact." At the same time, everyone concurred that the Soviets will continue to take advantage of what are likely to be numerous opportunities to enhance their presence and influence in a region in which American preferences have become less controlling and in which a variety of political and economic currents are working in favor of the USSR. (S)

2. Afghanistan. There was general agreement that the evidence for recent large-scale Soviet reinforcements is shaky and does not yet warrant a change in our current estimate of 85,000 troops in-country. There was also general agreement that incremental reinforcements are more likely than a massive troop influx for the foreseeable future. Reports of large numbers of non-Soviet bloc and allied forces arriving in Afghanistan were generally discounted, although it was agreed that the Soviets would welcome an opportunity to "internationalize" their military presence. (S)

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3. Iran. It was agreed that the Soviets have made only marginal progress in their efforts to normalize relations with Tehran but are still committed to the effort. However, Tass has recently attacked Foreign Minister Gotzbadeh for his Oslo meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Wa and the Kremlin no longer seems to be tilting toward Iran in its conflict with Iraq. At the same time, the Soviets have not sought to exacerbate this conflict and would probably welcome a chance to mediate it in the improbable event that they were invited to do so and foresaw a real prospect of success. (S)

4. Yugoslavia. Only a few mild reservations were entered to a presentation which interpreted the recent changes in economic policy and party leadership arrangements as signs that Tito's heirs are facing up to the country's economic problems and developing needed mechanisms and procedures for a smooth and stable succession. (S)

5. TNF/MBFR. It was agreed that the Soviets are unlikely to surprise Chancellor Schmidt with major changes in their established positions and will almost certainly not make an offer of sufficient generosity to induce him to back away from NATO's December TNF decision. (S)

6. U.S. Elections. It was agreed that the Soviets foresee no substantial revival of bilateral relations with the US before the November elections. It was suggested that the Soviets might be particularly assertive during the preelection period and then adopt a more conciliatory posture vis-a-vis a new administration. However, most analysts were skeptical about such a premeditated acceleration of current trends. The subject of the role of the forthcoming U.S. elections as an influence on Soviet behavior was deemed worthy of more systematic examination at subsequent meetings. (S)

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